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*An Enquiry into the Nature of the PASSIONS, and the Manner in which they are represented by the Tragick Poets, particularly with respect to Jealousy; including some Observations on SHAKESPEAR'S OTHELLO.*

*Et quia amans semper, quod timet, esse putat. OVID.*



T is a very common Objection, and one which we find frequently insisted upon by most of our *Criticks*, that POETS are apt to exaggerate all *Passions*, when they come to represent them in *Tragedy*, and strain them to such a Degree, that the Persons they draw, ceasing to be Men distemper'd in their Minds, act like Monsters, that by a kind of Enchantment are become Furies. But when we come to consider Things more closely, we shall find this a Charge not easily

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easily maintained; for when once any Passion gains the despotick Empire of the human Breast, there follows such a Series of wild and irrational Actions, as singly taken, would argue the Man absolutely mad that committed them. But because numbers are actuated by their Passions as well as he, it is agreed, that a Series of intemperate Actions shall not be esteemed a Proof of *Madness*, but serve only to shew that a Man has very *strong Passions*. This is absurd enough indeed, but so it is, as we see and know from daily Experience.

Amongst these, I know of none that when it has usurped the Throne of Reason, acts with such tyrannical Rage and Licence as *Jealousy*. It is for this Reason, than whenever Poets attempt to paint a Man under its Influence, they seldom regard his *Rank*, his *Character*, or his *Temper*; but confounding all Rules of Decency and Decorum, show him, however great or elevated in his Station, as brutal as one of the lowest Mob, forgetting what is *due to himself*, or to the Person who is the Object of his *Jealousy*, fixing his Thoughts wholly upon the real or the supposed Injury, and in Consequence of his fixing them, blind to all Rules of Behaviour, and lost to all Sense of Reasoning, all Capacity of reflecting, or comparing his Actions with his Duty. Neither are they restrained from this by any Consideration of the Manners they have given him before he is supposed to be infected with this Disease of the Mind; if he was mild and gentle, they make no Scruple of changing him in an Instant into a Creature fierce and cruel; if remarkable for Calmness and Circumspection, they show him harsh and violent in a Moment; if not only courteous, but ceremonious in his Demeanour, they make him appear not barely blunt, but surly, from the Minute he is struck with Jealousy, and in short, opposite in all Respects to what he was.

The Question is, whether our Poets are justified in this; that is to say, whether they follow Nature, or outrun her; whether in Cases of this kind, they draw the true Picture of a jealous Man, or a hideous *Caracatura* of *Jealousy*, and consequently, whether they deserve to be commended or condemned. I must for my own part confess, that it seems to me they are much better acquainted with the human Mind, than those who have taken upon them to censure them; and that it may be very justly affirmed, that the boldest Poets have not ventured to feign Actions more out of the Road of Reason, than are related as Matters of Fact upon the same Topick by the most authentick Historians. Now if this can be made

out,

out, that is to say, if it can be shown from the Records of History, which are no other than *written Experience*, that when Men are stung with Jealousy they really act as wildly, as absurdly, and as inconsistently as the Poets represent them acting; then all Ground and Foundation of Criticism in this Respect will be taken away, and the Poets must be allowed to be better acquainted with the true Force of the Passions, than those who have taken upon them to find Fault with their Productions, and even to chastise the Publick for the Applause they have vouchsafed to those Productions, as supposing them just Representations of Nature.

Of all the inimitable *Shakespear's* Performances, there is not one more highly or more generally admired than his *OTHELLO*, yet this Play has fallen under the Hands of a merciless Critick, I mean Mr. *Rymer* of wrangling Memory, who has perswaded a Multitude of People to believe, that they not only applaud, but feel this Tragedy by Infatuation, catch accidentally those Impressions of the Passions, which Tragedy ought to move, weep without Cause, and pay that Tribute to the Author, which only the Players have deserved. According to him, the whole of this Tragedy is not only irregular and ill-writ, but improbable, monstrous, and absurd. A Blackamoor, and he too in Years, talks a young Lady of great Quality into Love with him, carries her off in a boisterous manner from her native Country, suffers himself to fall into Suspicion of her, upon trivial as well as groundless Causes, hears her Honour basely attacked by one in his Service, and instead of chastising, takes him for his Bosom Counsellor; then suspects him too; believes again; behaves like a Brute to his Wife, before Company; is convinced by the slight Circumstance of a Handkerchief; and then deliberately, and with a Show of Caution and Circumspection, commits with his own Hands a most shocking and detestable Murder, and all this in direct Contradiction to the Character before given of him by his own Officers, by *Desdemona*, the Senators, and the Duke of *Venice*. This I take it is the Sum of the *Indictment* brought by Mr *Rymer*, Attorney-General of the Criticks, against *Shakespear* as a *Poet*.—Now to pursue this Simile, I will bring the Matter to an *Issue*, and put it upon this short Question, *Whether SHAKESPEAR has followed Nature, or not?* And in order to decide it, I think the fairest Way is to have Recourse to Evidence, which I will next produce.

The Marquis *Ornano*, or, as he is often stiled, *Sampiera*, a Native of the Island of *Corfica*, distinguished himself in the civil Wars that happened in his Country, by a noble Zeal for Liberty, and by all the military Virtues that form a great Captain, and which afterwards raised him in *France* (a Country never famous for overvaluing the Merit of Strangers) to the highest Ranks in their Service. This Nobleman had married a young Lady of great Quality, *Marinna Ornano*, of whom he was passionately fond; a Lady whose exquisite Beauty was the least of her Perfections; whose Manners were as amiable as her Person, and whose Virtues were as conspicuous and as heroic as any the antient Writers have recorded, or the Authors of modern Romances have feigned. In all the Dangers and Distresses of her Husband, which were many and great, she bore a part; and when he was obliged to retire as an Exile into *France*, she followed him thither with her infant Son, afterwards so well known to the World by the Title of Marshal *Ornano*. Upon the Death of *Henry* the Second, her Husband despairing of any farther Succours from *France*, and finding himself proscribed and a Price set upon his Head by the *Genoese*, determined to ask the Assistance of the *Turk*; and for that Purpose made a Voyage to *Constantinople*. In his Absence the *Genoese* contrived to tamper with his Lady. She was related, and that very nearly too, unto some of the best Families of the Republick; and some of these suggested to her that, in case she would return and bring her Son with her, she might very possibly be able to procure a Pardon for the Marquis, notwithstanding all that he had done, and was still doing, to the Prejudice of the State.

It is no great wonder that the Marchioness *Ornano* listened to these Proposals; but her Husband having gained Intelligence of the whole Design, and either distrusting, as he might well do, the Sincerity of the *Genoese*, or being determined in his Aversion to that Republick, so far as to despise a Reconciliation, sent immediately into *France* his Secretary *Antonio St. Florentine*, with Instructions to persuade his Wife to lay aside all Thoughts of returning to *Genoa*. The Marchioness was no sooner acquainted with her Husband's settled Resolution, than she shewed her accustomed Obedience, and, at the Request of *Antonio*, removed from *Marseilles* to *Aix* in *Provence*. When the *Genoese* found that this Scheme of theirs of getting the Wife and Son of their capital Enemy into their Possession was defeated, they had recourse to another Project, and corrupting one of the Marquis's Domesticks, engaged him to throw out such

Hints



Hints as might make his Master jealous of *Antonio*; and in this they were but too successful; for he no sooner conceived a Suspicion of his Wife's Conduct, than forgetting his Concern for the Liberty of his Country, the important Negotiation in which he was engaged, and even the Injuries he had received from, and the implacable Hatred he bore the *Genoese*, he suddenly returned to *France*.

Upon his Arrival at *Marseilles*, finding his Lady gone from thence with *Antonio* to *Aix*, he required nothing farther to convince him; but immediately repairing thither, brought back his Lady and her Son to *Marseilles*, that he might the more easily escape when he had perpetrated the barbarous Fact that he intended. When he had her there, he told her in Terms very coarse, as well as cold, that she had offended him, and must die; the Lady submitted, and only made this Request, that, as no Man had ever touched her but himself, she might die by his Hand. To this he consented, and dropping one Knee upon the Ground, calling her his Mistress, and showing, in the midst of the most savage Cruelty, a Tendernefs of Mind and Horror of the Fact, asked her Pardon, as Executioners are wont to do, and then strangled her with her Handkerchief.

This is a bare historical Narrative of the Fact, as set down by the Writer of *Sampietro's* Life, and by many other impartial and authentick Historians; and, I presume, whoever considers it attentively, will see that there are as many Circumstances of Levity, Distraction of Mind, and an absurd Mixture of passionate Love and barbarous Resentment, as *Shakespeare* has expressed in his Tragedy of *Othello*; and that the *Genoese* was, to all Intents and Purposes, as great a Monster in Nature as *the Moor*. I conclude therefore, that our Poet has preserved his Character, has painted the Passion of Jealousy as it ought to be painted in such a Man; has copied faithfully, without exceeding or exaggerating; and has frightened us, which, by the way, is the very Essence of Tragedy, not with an imaginary Scene, but with a real Spectacle of a wise and worthy Man made mad by Jealousy, and becoming a wild, ungovernable, brutal, and blood-thirsty Monster; and yet accompanied with Circumstances that deservedly excite Compassion. So that if what the Criticks define about Tragedy, that it is the Art of instructing by exciting Terror and Pity, he has accomplished it beyond any Writer in our Language, and may be therefore justly stiled inimitable.

I might indeed observe, that the Story upon which this Tragedy is built, was not absolutely a Fiction, or at least no Fiction

tion of *Shakespear's*; for he had it very nearly as he has represented it from *Cynthia's* Novels. I might also observe that, as this very Fact happened before he wrote his Play, and as it made a very great Noise in the World, it might have reached his Knowledge; and from certain Circumstances in this Tragedy, one might be really tempted to think he had it in View. I might remark too, that the Charge against him of neglecting a Moral is very ill founded, and arises rather from the Petulancy of the Critick, than from any Obscurity in the Performance. But I wave all these Considerations, and keep close to the Point which I laid down, that the Tragick Poets are very unjustly charged with exaggerating the Passions, and making Men appear either wilder or worse than they are when under their Influence: And that the Instance of *Othello* in support of this Doctrine is unjust, and the Reflections made upon the Author for drawing him as he has done, improper and ill founded. But this is one Species of Jealousy only, though it is indeed the worst Species, viz. the Suspicious. I shall hereafter take Occasion to consider the Subject farther, and bestow a few Remarks upon a Play of *Fletcher's*, and perhaps upon a Tragedy of Mr. *Rowe's*, with the same View as in this Essay; that is, to vindicate the Conduct of those Poets, and to show that *Horace* was in the right, when he asserted that there was more true Morality to be learned from their Works, than those of the Philosophers.

*Copy of a Letter to a Friend in the Country, occasioned by the Siege of Bergen op Zoom; in which are contained historical, critical, and military Remarks, as well on the Errors committed by Count Lowendahl in the Progress of that Undertaking, as on the Strength of that Fortrefs, the Difficulties that attend the Approaches thereto, and the modern Method of prosecuting Sieges by Sap, throwing of Bombs, Stones, &c.*

IT is very natural, Sir, that living at so great a Distance from, and coming so seldom to Town, the News of the Siege of *Bergen op Zoom* should affect you more than it does us, who are every Day finding something new in the Papers; and who have besides so many fresh Objects in our sight, that we are the less solicitous about those Things we only read or hear. But

you are certainly a little in the wrong, to fancy Fame in this Case magnifies the Thing, represents this Siege of greater Consequence than it really is, and makes the Defence far brighter in Appearance than in Reality. I own to you that, in my Judgment, the Point is of more Weight than even we apprehend it; and that in the Memory of those now living, there has not happened a Siege more singular in its Circumstances, or that will be attended with more extraordinary Consequences than this of *Bergen op Zoom*.

But to make you comprehend this perfectly, to lay open to you the Motives which led the *French* to engage in this Siege, the true Condition of the Place when besieged, the Oversights committed in the Siege, the Reasons why it has lasted so long, the Nature and Advantages of its Fortifications, the Method of the *French* Attacks, the Manner of acting by Sap, the Use of Engines for throwing Stones, and the Possibility of their being so long before the Place, pushing the Siege vigorously, and yet making no farther Progress, would demand more Leisure than I have to spare, and would require more Time than you have to read. But when you are pleased to intimate with all this, that you know but little of Fortification, and are a great way from your Books, it puts it still more out of your Power; yet because you are so desirous of it, and fancy that great Credit would result from reading such a Letter to the Justice, Curate, and Exciseman in your Parish, I am content to do what I can; and, without farther Introduction, shall proceed to answer your Epistle as fully as I may.

The Fortress of *Bergen op Zoom* is the Key of the United Provinces on the side of *Brabant*, and, I might add, of *Zealand* too; but if this Fortress were lost, the Enemy would instantly become Masters of a great part of the one, and find the Way open to their Attempts upon the other. So that there is no Reason to wonder Count *Lewendahl* laid aside his Design of making a Descent upon South *Beveland*, after he had once formed the Project of attacking this Place; because if he could become Master of it, that Enterprize would be much facilitated. The seizing of *Dutch Flanders* and the Island of *Cat-sand*, the Declaration made in the Name of the most Christian King to the States General, and various other Circumstances, prove beyond a Contradiction, that the great Point *France* has in View is, to force the *Dutch Republick* to detach herself from her Allies, or, which is the same thing in other Words, to become absolutely dependent upon him; towards which a more effectual Step could not be taken than reducing *Bergen op Zoom*,

as you will readily believe, when you consider that this important Place is so situated, that the People of *Rotterdam* cannot sleep in their Beds for the Noise made by the Artillery during the Siege.

The *Dutch* could not but know the great Consequence of this Place, and ought therefore to have been extremely attentive to its Preservation; but it seems they had not so great a Distrust as they ought to have had of the *French*; and besides, they have never been remarkable for expending Money before the Necessity was apparent. The Fortifications were in very good Order; and if Artillery, Amunition, and a sufficient number of Persons belonging to the Train, seem from the Account you have received, to be wanting; you are to consider first, that they were always sure of having it in their Power to throw in these when necessary; and secondly, that the Length of this Siege has made such a Consumption, as no Magazines could have supplied had they been originally and ever so well filled. So that to gather from what has been sent thither since the Siege began, that the Place was almost destitute at first, is a Conclusion not at all warranted from the Premises.

What you have heard with respect to the Mistakes of Count *Leuwendahl*, is very true, though I do not know that any thing has appeared upon this Subject in the *Dutch Gazettes*, in which though they charge him with Obstinacy, they are absolutely silent as to his Oversights. Of these such as are well acquainted with military Affairs, say, that he committed three that are very notorious; the first is, his omitting to reduce *Fort-Lillo* upon the *Schelde*, before he attempted to besiege *Bergen op Zoom*; because the *Dutch* being possessed of that Fortrefs hinder his receiving Supplies by Water from *Antwerp*, which would be both a safer and a speedier Passage than by Land, where his Convoys are frequently exposed to Danger, and can never pass but under large Escorts. In the next Place they say, that his first Effort should have been made against the Lines, that he might have had an Opportunity of investing the Place, which hitherto he has not been able to effect, and which now, in all Probability, he never will be able to effect. The Third is his making too many Attacks at once, viz. on *Fort-Rover*, on the Redoubt called *Kyck en de Pot*, and against the Lunettes of *Zealand* and *Utrecht*, which exposed, fatigued, and wasted his Troops more than was necessary. There is no Question to be made, that the *French General* may be able to assign various plausible Reasons in the

justification of his Conduct; but in the mean time it is out of Dispute, that these are the real Causes of his slow Progress in the Siege; and it is not all improbable, that if he fails in his Attempts they will be assigned as sufficient Motives for his Punishment, or at least his Disgrace.

In my own Opinion, however, he was led into these Errors from a Notion that upon his bombarding and burning the Town, the principal Inhabitants of the Place would have forced the Garrison to surrender; but this had a very contrary Effect; for the People seeing their Houses burnt, and the Place in as bad a Situation as it could be, had nothing farther to fear; whereas if he had spared the Town, and had proceeded in the usual Manner, they might have been kept in Suspense, and his Threats of bombarding and burning might have been of much more Use to him than those Barbarities, which have served only to make the People desperate. It is however true, that in some former Instances he had found this Method effectual, and there is the less Wonder therefore that he trusted so much to it in the present Case; nor is at all unlikely, that if he miscarries, this part of his Conduct may also become an Article in his Accusation; for nothing but Success can justify such Actions.

The Fortification of this Place has been much talked of, and for want of having any distinct Plans of *Bergen op Zoom*, since it was regularly strengthened by *Baron Coeborn*, abundance of absurd and ridiculous Things have been said about it. This Engineer was in his Time looked upon as one of the greatest Masters of his Art, and without Doubt he was so, but not incomparable, and without a Competitor, as we see him set forth in some of our Papers; which I do not mention as any Derogation from his Merit, which questionless was very great; but to prevent your having a false or ill-grounded Notion of it. All the great Engineers who have written upon their Art, have formed different Systems, and laid down different Rules for the Construction of the several Works now in use; and according to the Method pursued in any Fortification, when it is spoke of by Men of the Trade, it is stiled the *Polygon of Coeborn, Pagan, or Vauhan*; which means no more, than that the Works to which it refers, are constructed upon their respective Principles.

This Phrase may, and very frequently is taken in a very different Sense, and that is when it implies no more than a simple Denomination, as *Coeborn's Bastion*, signifying a Work so called in Honour of him. It was after the Misfortunes

that *Holland* sustained in 1672, that the States General, by the Advice, and indeed at the earnest Persuasion of King *William*, directed the Fortification of this Place by that famous Engineer; who considering the Strength of its Situation, and its many natural Advantages, resolved to make it, as far as in his Power lay, impregnable. To give you some Idea of these natural Advantages I must observe, that the Place stands upon a Flat, which is not overlooked by any rising Ground in the Neighbourhood; or in the Phrase of Engineers, is not commanded by any Eminence. Great part of the Country round it is a Morass, and consequently inaccessible. There is a Canal from the River *Schelde*, covered by a regular Fort, which protects two Havens so effectually, that the Place can always be supplied and relieved by Sea; and lastly, the Garrison have the Command of Sluices, by which their Ditches can be at any time filled with Water.

The Situation and Extent of the Town obliged *Coeborn* to fortify it irregularly, that is to say, not in the Form of any mathematical Figure: In order to this, the Circumference is protected by ten Bastions, and the Intervals secured by twenty one Ravelins or Half-Moons, which are again covered by very strong Stone Places of Arms, which are stiled Lunettes; these are to be distinguished from what the Engineer stiles Half-Moons, as being smaller Fortifications, presenting each a saillant Angle, that is, a sharp Point towards the Besiegers with two broad Faces; the Rear of the Work respecting and covering the Place. Besides all these Works and Outworks, that Part of the Fortification which is most exposed, is again covered with a very strong Half mooned Redoubt, called *Kyk en de Poel*, which was an old Fortification altered and improved by *Coeborn*; and to all this there is added three very strong Forts that reach to the Inundation on the side of *Steenbergen*. So that if you will cast your Eye upon any large Map of the Country adjacent to this Fortress, you will see at one View, that it is as effectually covered and protected on all sides, as, in the nature of Things, can be either expected or wish'd.

But I must not forget one Thing, which contributes very much towards rendering *Bergen-op Zoom* stronger than almost any other Place, except *Norden*; and it is this, that the Fortifications instead of rising, are sunk beneath the Level; so that except part of the Parapet of the Rampart, there is nothing appears to the Besiegers; and, consequently, their Batteries cannot affect the Place, till such time as they are able to erect them on the Ruins of the Glacis: and this might probably be  
another



another Reason why, in hopes of saving time, Count *Lowendahl* began with throwing Bombs and red hot Bullets into the Place; foreseeing that, in the ordinary way of besieging, this would be a Work of Time, more especially as the Communication with the Place was still open both by Sea and from the Lines.

I hope, from what has been said, that you will easily conceive the Reason why, upon approaching the Outworks of the Place, Count *Lowendahl* had recourse to Sapping. The Sap is carried on in a strait Line, whereas the Trenches, as every body knows, run in Zig-zags, and are connected by Parallels; but the Sap is direct, pointing from the Works of the Besiegers towards the saillant Angle of the Fortification to be attacked: and the Reason of this is, that they may not be raked, or, as the *French* term it, enfiladed by the Fire of the Place. The Sap is commonly as deep, at least, as a Man is high, and so broad to admit of two Men in Front. When this kind of Work is begun, the Battalions that mount the Trench every Day are called over, and the Engineer who has the Direction, informs them that he will give so much a Yard to those who work in the Sap; and as there are not many that can work there at a time, there are, generally speaking, enough to accept the Proposal; though the Price is not very high, it may be a Crown, or more, according to the Danger to which they are exposed.

The Sappers are covered with Fascines, upon which they throw Earth and raw Hides; and they have either Sacks of Wool or Mantlets before them. They advance also on the side of the Sap, Mantlets or Sacks of Wool or of Earth; behind which are posted ten or twelve Grenadiers, with large and long Guns to support the Sappers, and to fire upon the Enemy as they appear in the covered Way. In respect to the Business of Mining and Countermining, it would take up too much room for me to enter into it here, and therefore I will refer you to the History of the Siege of *Turin*, where you will find it largely and fully explained in all its several Branches.

When the Besiegers are advanced pretty near the Works they intend to attack, they make use of Bombs, as well to demolish them, as to incommode those who are posted in the Works for their Defence; but as they draw nearer they commonly change their Bombs for large Granades, which are also thrown out of Mortars. The principal Skill of the Engineer consists in causing small Bombs or large Granades to burst five or six Feet from the Ground, because it is known from

Experience that, by this Management, they do the most Mischief. The Method made use of for this Purpose is, to suffer the Fuzee to consume a certain time in the Mortar before the Bomb or Granade is thrown: but, in Things of this Nature, there is a Knack which must be acquired by Practice, and which it is difficult, if not impossible, to teach. The Pierrier which is made use of in throwing of Stones, resembles a Mortar in its Figure, but it is, generally speaking, larger and more capacious, but however, it does not carry so far.

The great Use of them is, to distress the Besiegers when they are working in removing Rubbish, repairing Breaches, or raising Retrenchments behind them; in all which Cases they do prodigious Execution, because there is no getting out of their reach, since they are not seen in their Passage, as a Bomb is. When the Besiegers are apprized, either by Deserters or Spies, that the Enemy make use of Planks or Galleries to cover themselves from the Stones, they have recourse to Bombs, which, by their Weight, demolish those Coverings; and as soon as they conceive that they have had their Effect, they begin to throw Stones again; and sometimes they throw alternately Bombs and Stones all Night long. When by these Methods, as well as by the Batteries erected on the Ruins of the Glacis, or of any of the Outworks that are taken, they have made a Breach that is practicable; that is, which the Soldiers can mount, an Attack is made under the Cover of all the Fire that the Besiegers can make on that side; and when this is done with Success, they fix themselves upon some new Post, which is styled making a Lodgment; from which if they are not removed by an Attack from the Besieged, or obliged to desert it by springing of Mines, they next erect Batteries there, and proceed as before.

The Success of this Siege is still in the Womb of Time; but we have already seen enough of it to know, that the Alteration which has happened in the *Dutch* Government, is equally favourable to the common Cause of the Allies, and to their particular Preservation. We saw no Defence like this of *Bergen op Zoom*, before they made Choice of a Stadtholder. And old General *Cronstrom*, who has done his Duty so well there, will appear from thence with greater Dignity when he returns to the *Hague*, in order to preside in the new Council of War. By the Defence that has been already made, we have an Opportunity of learning from Experience some considerable Maxims in the Art of War, which indeed may be found long ago laid down by the great Masters of the Science, from their

their own Sagacity and perfect Acquaintance with the Science; but are now so fully verified that, in all human Probability, there would scarce be found in this Age, another General intrepid or rash enough, to fancy either his Conduct or his Fortune may enable him to dispense with them.

In the first place it clearly proves that there cannot be any thing more absurd or dangerous, than to besiege a Town which it is impossible to invest; there may indeed be some few Instances in which a Measure of this Sort may have been attended with Success, either from the Terror of the Inhabitants, or from the Treachery of the Governor; but, generally speaking, Attempts of this Kind prove the Ruin of the Army that make them, and as often destroy totally the Reputation of such Generals, as aim at distinguishing themselves by such romantic Undertakings. In the present Case we are told, that Count *Lowendahl* has lost sixteen thousand Men in six Weeks. I will not be answerable for the Truth of this Fact; but from the *French Journal* of the Siege, which I have seen, it appears to have been very bloody: and such as are well acquainted with military Affairs know, that where the Loss of the Besiegers is very great, Methods are used to hide it, in the daily Returns made by the Officers who command in the Trenches.

However, the many Reinforcements he has received, the vast Supplies that have been sent him of Ammunition and military Stores, the many Attacks that have been made, and the Number of Mines that have been sprung, sufficiently prove that this Siege must have cost a multitude of Lives, and consequently have weakened the besieging Army greatly. Besides, it is owned that the Loss of the Besieged amounts to four thousand Men; and from thence it should seem that, tho' the former Computation is very large, yet, if Deserters be taken in, I cannot think that, according to the Rules of Proportion, it ought to be esteemed excessive. But from hence there is one thing clear, that the Length of the Siege, and the great Loss of the *French*, is owing to the Cause before assigned, viz. attacking a Place that could not be invested; for it is most evident that, if the Garrison had not been supported from the Lines, the Place must have been long ago taken, notwithstanding its great Strength, and the Advantages that have been before set forth as derived from the extraordinary manner of its Fortification.

Another Thing that appears from this Siege is, that a moderate Barrier of Towns well fortified, and sustained by a good Army in the Field, acting wholly upon the Defensive, is sufficient

ficient to secure a Country for a long Time, against all the Efforts even of a superior Enemy ; for, without doubt, several such Sieges as this of *Bergen op Zoom*, would consume such a Number of Troops, as would reduce the Forces that *France* is able to employ on this Side, in the space of a Campaign or two, in such a manner as would make them sincerely repent their Endeavours to distress their Neighbours into a State of Dependence ; and would afford the Friends to the Liberties of *Europe*, the comfortable Assurance that, by a timely and proportionable Support, those who thus gallantly defend themselves, may be saved and protected.

To conclude this long Letter, and to give you my Thoughts freely of the Issue of this Business, it seems evident to me that, if the *French* persist obstinately in carrying on the Siege after the manner they have hitherto done, they will run a great hazard of being obliged to raise it ; either from their being attacked in their Lines by the Army of Observation, which is already become very considerable, and which is daily augmented by small Bodies from different Places ; or from the Decay of their own Army, which by Sicknefs and Fatigue, as well as by the Numbers they have lost, and must continue losing, will be diminished to such a Degree as, all Circumstances considered, will render it impracticable for them to carry their Point by this Method. But, if becoming desperate, they should change the Plan of their Operations, that is, should suspend the Prosecution of the Siege, and attack the Troops in the Lines, the Fate of *Bergen op Zoom* will then depend upon the Event of that Action ; which may, perhaps, be known by that time, or very soon after this Letter shall reach your Hands.

*I am,*

*with great Affection*

*and Respect, &c.*

N. L.

The CHILD-BIRTH.

In the Manner of Mr. GAY.

THE doleful Dumps I sing, and tearful Woes,  
Of *Marian* teeming with unlawful Throes:  
The sheeneſt Laſs in *Berkeſhire* was ſhe known,  
Of all that Butter ſell to *Reading Town*:  
Not the ſev'n Siſters cou'd o'er her prevail,  
The golden Farmer's Daughters of the Vale,  
Tho' every *Oxford Muſe* their Charms has ſung,  
And graveſt Doctors † join'd the tuneful Throng.

Ye Peers! who, careleſs of Ambition, chuſe  
To court the Labours of the Paſt'ral Muſe;  
And all ye wond'rous Bards, who try the Lay,  
Where black *Cam* rolls, or *Jſis*' Eddies play,  
Aſſiſt the Labours of an humble Swain,  
Rude to the Pipe, and Novice on the Plain.

Nine Months ſucceſſive now had rolled round  
Since *Marian* fiſt the pleaſing Miſchief found;  
In vain her Hands had cull'd th' abortive Weed,  
Nor aught avail'd the 'Pothecary's Aid:  
Her Womb began with fatal Size to ſwell,  
And ſick'ning Qualms the bluſhful Secret tell:  
Then all in ſad Deſpair ſhe made her Moan,  
*Lodona's* Waters eccho'd Groan for Groan.

' Ah! faithleſs *Colin Clout*! ah! luckleſs I!  
' And can'ſt thou, cruel! from thy *Marian* fly?  
' How often haſt thou ſuck'd my panting Breath?  
' How often ſwore to love me true till Death?

' But

† The Rev. Dr. Wilks wrote a Poem upon them.

' But to the Justice I'll reveal my Plight,  
 ' And with a Constable pursue thy Flight.  
 ' —Ah! how unequal, as our Parson preaches,  
 ' Are this World's Goods? and sure he rightly teaches;  
 ' For what to Maidens brings eternal Stain,  
 ' (Sad Management!) gives Honour to the Swain.  
 ' 'Twas on the blithest Morn of all the Year,  
 ' When new-born *May* bids ev'ry Shepherd cheer;  
 ' When artful Maids their rival Fancies show,  
 ' And well-wrought Garlands bloom on every Bough;  
 ' When gaudy Fairs bespangle ev'ry Street,  
 ' And lowing Cows the novel Pasture greet;  
 ' Fresh rose I, *Marian* hight, from rustic Bed,  
 ' The Morning Dream still hov'ring o'er my Head;  
 ' Gay Shews and Sweethearts had employ'd my Thought,  
 ' The Kiss imprinted, and the Fairing bought!  
 ' From Lavender I drew the tucker'd Smock,  
 ' And Hose boastful of a various Clock;  
 ' The silver'd Knot well-scollop'd on my Head,  
 ' And down'd the *Sunday* Gown besorb'd with Red.  
 ' Thus all bedight, and ready for the Fair,  
 ' I sat impatient, with a wistful Air;  
 ' Expecting *Calin Clout*, my perjur'd Swain,  
 ' Who always follow'd *Marian* on the Plain;  
 ' With him the Moon-light Walk I us'd to tread,  
 ' With him I danc'd upon the sportive Mead;  
 ' That very Morn had taught the Snails to crawl,  
 ' And print mysterious Letters on the Wall.  
 ' At length he came, and I with joyous Meed  
 ' Mounted behind him on the pillion'd Steed;  
 ' Sweetly I sung, he whistled to the Lay,  
 ' Sweetly I sung the Song, and sung the Day;  
 ' What *beauteous Scenes* began the tuneful Tale!  
 ' And next I humm'd the *Sweets of Arno's Vale*;

Then



- Then *Molly Mogg*, fair *Damsel* of the *Rose*,
- And *lovely Peggy*, Taste of *London Beaux*.
- And now in *View* gay *Reading* strikes our *Eyes*,
- And all the *Dainties* of the *Fair* arise ;
- Here \* *Bromigam* its boasted *Ware* displays,
- These *Leather-Breeches* hight, and *Bodice-Stays*;
- Here *posied Garters* flutter'd in the *Way*,
- There *painted Hobby-Horses* seem to *neigh* ;
- Here *Belles* in *Gingerbread* all-gilded over,
- And little *gew-gaw H —ys* act the *Lover*.
- *Shepherds* and *Nymphs* from every *Part* repair,
- All who from *Oxford Hills* direct the *Share*,
- Who *fell the Forest*, or who *mow the Mead*,
- Or *drag in little Boats* the *finny Breed* :
- Her wide-mouth'd *Sons* low-seated *Heuley* sends,
- And *smoky Ockingham* its *Tribute* lends.
- But far did *Marian* all the rest outvie,
- No *Cheek* so *ruddy*, nor so *black an Eye* ;
- Scarce *Dolly C —k*, the *Daughter* of the *May'r*,
- With all the *flaxen Ringlets* of her *Hair*,
- With all the *snowy Fulness* of her *Breast*,
- In *blithsome Features* might with me *contest*.
- All *Youths* ambitiously around me *strove*,
- Each gave some *chosen Emblem* of his *Love* ;
- One *queintly* brought the *Garters* for my *Thighs*,
- While *simple Archness* sparkled in his *Eyes*.
- But all their *Fairings* unsuccessful *prove*,
- Still true to *Colin Clout* I held my *Love*.
- — Ah ! fly *Deceiver* ! you *inclasp'd* my *Arm*,
- And *seem'd* my *Saviour*, while you *meant* my *Harm* ;
- Far too *unequal* was the *high Reward*,
- My *Maidenhead* must *pay thee* for thy *Guard* ;
- Already *warm'd* with *Joy*, you *win* my *Heart*,
- And *stamp* a little *Colin* e'er we *part*.

\* A Town famous for working in Steel.

' - Yet now, when Nature fills my Womb, to fly—  
 ' Nor yet one Tear to issue from thine Eye—  
 ' My slighted Love to quick Resentment turns;  
 ' Lo! my Blood rises, and my Cheek all burns:  
 ' O I cou'd tear thee as I'd tear this Glove—  
 ' Go, horrid Monster! I despise thy Love,  
 ' Thy Oaths I quit, thy Fairings I resign,  
 ' Forget, renounce thee, hate whate'er was thine.  
 ' \* No Christian Mother bound thy Infant Head,  
 ' Some Turk begat thee, or some Papist bred;  
 ' Or dropt on Cambrian Hills a squallid Brat,  
 ' Some She-Goat suckled thee with savage Teat.  
 ' † —Go to thy Drab, whoe'er has won thy Heart,  
 ' And may the Pox devouring make thee smart;  
 ' ‡ My vengeful Ghost shall haunt thee o'er the Plain,  
 ' Yes, thou shalt suffer, Villain, for my Pain.  
 ' —But ah! my Rage relents, my Sorrow flows;  
 ' Come Colin! faithless Shepherd! ease my Woes.  
 ' And must I in the Sheet opprobrious stand?  
 ' Thy Plight is troth'd, ah! come and give thy Hand:  
 ' My Conscience starts, whene'er I hear a Knell,  
 ' And is a little Love deserving Hell?  
 ' Too hard a Penance for a Sin so slight!  
 ' Ah! how my Heart misgives me ev'ry Night?  
 ' When Sleep has clos'd my Sorrow-streaming Eyes,  
 ' Then ghastly Dreams, and hateful Thoughts arise:

\* \* All

\* *Nec tibi Diva parens, generis nec Dardanus auster  
 Perfide, sed duris genuit te cautibus horrens  
 Caucasus, Hyrcanæque admorunt ubera Tigres.*

Æn. 4. 365.

† *I, sequere Italiam ventis, &c.*

*Spero equidem mediis, siquid pia numina, &c.*

‡ *Omnibus umbra locis adero, dabis improbe pœnas.*

Æn. 4.

- \* \* All unaccompany'd methinks I go
- \* O'er Irish Bogs, a Wilderness of Woe!
- \* Ah! my Wits turn! strange Phantoms round me fly!
- \* Lo! I am chang'd into a Goosb'ry Pie!
- \* Forbear to eat me up, inhuman Rabble!
- \* Cocks crow, Ducks quake, Hens cackle, Turkies gabble.

Thus as she rav'd, her Womb with rueful Throws  
 Did to the Light a lusty Babe disclose:  
 Long while she doubted of the smirking Boy,  
 Or on her Knee to dandle, or destroy;  
 Love prompted her to save, and Pride to drown,  
 At length Pride conquer'd, and she dropt her Son.

\* — *Semperque relinqui*  
*Sola sibi, semper longum incomitata videtur*  
*Ire viam, & Tyrios deserti quærere terrâ.*  
*Eumenidum veluti demens videt agmina Pentheus, &c.*

Copy of a Paper found in the Road of Twickenham,  
 supposed to be a Bill blown off the Door of a  
 House.

**T**O VERNON once, and once to POPE, Folks say  
 I have belong'd; to STANHOPE for the Day  
 \* They give me now.—But honest Reader know,  
 These are Mistakes fell out I can't tell how.  
 Truth would you learn? then mark what I advance,  
 TIME has the Title, and his Steward is CHANCE.

*An Epistle from a PARISH CLERK in Dorsetshire, to  
an absent VICAR.*

**M**ASTER, an't please you, I do send  
These Letter to you as a Friend,  
Hoping you'll pardon the Inditing,  
Becaz I am not us'd to Writing;  
And that you will not take unkind,  
A Word or zo, from poor *George Hind*.  
For I am always in the Way,  
And needs must hear what People say.

First of the House they make a Joke,  
And zay the Chimnies never smok.  
Now the Occasion of these Jests,  
As I do think, were Swallows Nests  
That chanc'd the other Day to val  
Into the Parlour, Zut and all.  
Beside, the People not a few  
Begin to murmur much at you,  
For leaving of them in the Lurch,  
And letting Strangers zerve the Church,  
Who are in haste to go agen,  
Zo we ha'nt zang the Lord knows when.  
And for their Preaching, I do know  
As well as most, 'tis but zo zo.  
Zure if the Call you had were right,  
You ne'er could thus your Neighbours flight.  
But I do fear you've zet your Aim on  
Nought in the World but vilthy Mammon.

Then

Then People, when the Church is o'er,  
Do go a stragling o'er the Moor;  
A Zundays there is such a Hooting,  
And the yung Squires do go a Zhooting;  
Tho' I had never learnt a Letter,  
I think that I cou'd tell 'em better.  
But it don't matter what I talk  
To them, or any other Volk;  
Of all I zay they take no heed,  
Measter, 'twoud grieve you if you zeed!—  
The Boys are come to zuch a Pals,  
They've broken ev'ry Pane of Glas:  
If you do go the Orchard round,  
There's not a Quodling to be found.  
I think there's scarce a Zoul that's living  
Minds the Commandment against Thieving.  
Before they're ripe, the Walnut-Tree  
Has not a Walnut, you can zee.  
Now these the Boys cou'd never get,  
Because they have no Kernels yet.  
Zome zay, that in a certain Place  
They've pickled 'em to put in Zauce;  
I'm zure to zave 'em I was willing,  
Zome Years they've yielded vorty Shilling.

I'm zorry I'm to write a Letter  
Zo full of News that is no better;  
But 'twoud displease you to conceal  
Whatever happens, good or ill:  
Zo I will tell you one thing more,  
Which, when I zeed, did grieve me zore.  
The Pars'nage House, that look'd so tight,  
Upon the Roof is naked quite;

The

The Wind has stript the Thatch away,  
 Zo it rains in both Night and Day.  
 These Things unto my Mind did bring  
 The Zong of *Deb'rah* which we zing.  
 Against a Man, as we read there,  
 The Stars did in their Courses war;  
 But God forbid, that such Disaster  
 Should e'er befall my Rev'rend Master.  
 So hoping that I han't been rude  
 I think 'tis Time for to conclude;  
 Desiring you will still be kind  
 To *Morden-Clerk*, your Friend, *George Hind*.

P. S.

This at the Ale-house in our Town,  
 On Zunday Night I did write down.  
 And Mrs. *Mortimer* do join  
 Her humble Zervice, Zir, with mine;  
 Wishing, if it so please the Lord,  
 That you to us may be restor'd.  
 I for my part wou'd quit the Place  
 To have you come again in Peace.  
 And if the Bushop wou'd consent,  
 When I from *Morden-Clerkship* went,  
 At *Maddington* to make me Curate,  
 I'd do the Duty just at your Rate;  
 Nor ask you more than half the Price  
 That wou'd another Man suffice.  
 Bezide that, I could teach the Ringers,  
 And be a Master for the Zingers.  
 So you'll consider my Request,  
 And God direct you vor the best.

The



The K I S S.

**W**HILE with Lips half-clos'd I strove  
To kiss the Object of my Love,  
And from the open Passage drew  
Breath as sweet as *Hybla's* Dew;  
My Soul with frantic Rapture stung,  
Leap'd to my Mouth, there flutt'ring hung:  
Thence took its Flight, and made a Venture  
In at my *Chloe's* Lips to enter:  
But not content alone to skim  
The honey'd Moisture of the Brim,  
Eager its Way it downward press'd,  
To pass from mine to her sweet Breast.  
A Minute longer had we stay'd,  
And thus in wanton Dalliance play'd,  
My Soul enflam'd with am'rous Rage  
Had flown away, and left its Cage.  
Then most prodigious had it been,  
A Thing before nor heard nor seen,  
That I quite dead in ev'ry Part,  
Should only live in *Chloe's* HEART.

LITE.

## LITERARY MEMOIRS.

*Les Prejugés du Public, avec des Observations, par M. Denesse. A Paris, chez Pierre Franc. Giffart, Libraire, rue S. Jacques; à Saint Theres, 1747.*

That is,

*The Prepossessions of the Publick, together with Observations upon them, by M. Denesse. In two Volumes; the First containing 412, the Second 468 Pages, including Indexes, Approbations, &c.*

THE Design of this Author is to expose Prejudices and Prepossessions of every kind, and among all sorts of People. He lays it down as the Foundation of his Work, that Men of Letters complain of the Publick, and that in their Turn also the Publick complain of Men of Letters; what he aims at therefore is to shew that neither Side is absolutely in the Right or in the Wrong, and that sometimes the Publick complain without Reason, and sometimes also People who write make grievous Complaints of the Publick without any just Cause. In the Course of this Work, he tells us, that he has taken some extraordinary Liberties, that he has expressed his Sentiments very freely upon delicate Subjects, and that he has even ventured to draw Characters that may offend those whom they fit; but he declares this is not at all his Fault, it being his constant Maxim, *Parcere personis, dicere de vitiis*; to spare Persons, but never to spare Faults.

This Work, which has certainly a great deal of Merit, is in Fact, a Collection of Essays tending to illustrate the Points beforementioned. Of these the first Volume contains twenty-eight Discourses, and there are in the whole fifty-four. In order to the forming some Judgment of this Performance, we will give the English Reader the Titles of some of the first Essays. I. That the Confidence of the Wits of Antiquity was founded in the Prepossessions of the Publick in their Favour; and that the Publick has been immortal with Respect to them. II. That we really stand indebted to the Ancients for all that we have; the Folly of the contrary System and the Utility of this.

III.

III. That the Ancients are, and will be always our Superiors; how and why. IV. Whether Taste be arbitrary, and whether an Author is bound to comply with that of the Age in which he lives. V. That though the Taste of the present Age is decisive in favour of the Ancients; yet in many Respects it will not allow us to imitate them; as for Instance in the Licentiousness of their amorous Poets, which shews that we have a Complaisance for them that perhaps exceeds its due Bounds, &c.

As from these Titles we may form some Notion of the Nature and Design of this Gentleman's Work, so to give the Reader an Idea of the Manner in which he has executed it, and at the same time of the present fashionable Way of writing in *France*, I know not either a better or a shorter Way than to produce one of his Essays as a Specimen, by which we may judge of the rest; and this shall be the eighth, in which he undertakes to prove, that there is a certain Mode of Thinking and Writing peculiar to every Age, as well as to every Nation.

‘ It is not only in Ornaments, in Dress, in Civilities, in the manner of Conversation, and in Complements, that Fashion exercises a kind of Tyranny in *France*, but even in respect to the *Belles Letters*, every Branch of which is no less exposed thereto than all other Things. We have a certain Mode in our Thoughts and in our Expressions; and there is something so particular in this that when our Neighbours vary from it, they appear to us ridiculous, which is the Reason, that what is very fine in *English*, appears sometimes impertinent when translated into *French*. Hence also it comes to pass, that we are frequently astonished to find nothing interesting in the Works of an Author, which however have a high Reputation in the Country where they were written.

‘ This seems to me to prove that, with regard to witty Performances, they are like certain Fruits, which have not their true Taste, except in those Countries where they naturally grow, and which upon being transplanted lose much of their Excellence. It is for this Reason that the Translators of Foreign Authors, generally speaking, begin their Prefaces with acquainting the Reader, that for Want of understanding the Original he will not be able to enter into half the Spirit of the Thoughts or of the Expressions. But do these Gentlemen ever consider, that if we were as learned as they, we should have no sort of Need of their Assistance; and that it is to our Ignorance they owe their shining Title of Authors,

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which they so readily assume, tho' with some Appearance of Modesty?

Of all kind of Writings however, Fashion seems to have exercised its Dominion in its fullest Extent over Poetry. We have at this Day no such Thing as *Rondeaux* or Ballads, or (Heaven be praised) even Sonnets. The *Virgates*, the Sprig so called, because the short Verses and the long bore some Resemblance to a Branch, the *Triolet*, the *Vilanelle*, the *Chant-Royal*, which with great Beauties, had great Difficulties; the *Imperial Crown*, the *Kirielle*, and the *Eccho*, were all admir'd heretofore. At this Day we laugh at them all, consider them as the old-fashioned Habits of those Times, fit only for *Maquerades* in ours, tho' the Finery of our Fore-fathers. When a silly Rhymers has exhausted his whole Stock of Patience in forming one of these Trifles, we look upon him, and he looks upon himself, as a very extraordinary Person; but he is such an extraordinary Person, as a Man would appear to be who ventured now-a-days to walk the Streets in a slash'd Doublet, with a Ruff about his Neck, and Trunk Breeches.

There was a time when the Publick was regaled with whole Volumes of Sonnets and Ballads, and then they would vouchsafe to read the whole Work, whereas now it would be a very difficult thing to get any Body to run over the Title-Page. The ingenious Mr. *Benferade*, with infinite as well as useless Labours, turn'd all the *Metamorphoses* of *Ovid* into *Rondeaux*; and a great Pity it is that some other indefatigable Fool had not shew'd his Parts, in turning the Commentaries of *Cæsar* into *Triolettes*. What ridiculous and childish Manner of Writing, what *Gothick* Stupidity, to fancy any Force could be added to a Thought, or Beauty to its Appearance, by putting it into Couplets, Triplets, Quadrants, or any other whimsical kind of Stanza, while this same Thought so overrun with Ornament, had perhaps rather Obscurity than Dignity in Prose! To fancy that such a Mechanism could add to the Elegance or Neatness of the Discourse, and to believe that to walk safely, easily, and with a good Air, we ought to move about in Pattens or in Stilts, are Blunders of the same Species!

How thankful ought we to be to that good Sense, which has at last, and with much ado, banished for ever from amongst us these miserable Remains of Barbarism. We are disgusted with the *Marotick* Style, from its having been made use of to render base and obscene Thoughts too common. It

is certainly much harder to write than most People think; ill written it is the poorest Stuff in the World, and after all, there are few that can taste the supposed Delicacy of this sort of Satire. However it be, we see very little of it now; and though some People still pretend to find matchless Wit, Humour and Ridicule, in Works of that Sort, that fell from the Pens of our old Poets, it is now out of Date, and most People are wise enough to see the Absurdity of reviving what was Wit in the Days of *Francis I.* under the Reign of *Lewis XV.* The Acrosticks and double Acrosticks are barbarous Terms no longer understood; and the *Bout-Rimer*, the Anagrams and Logogriphes, are now entirely left to Country Wits, and to the wou'd-be Wits of the City.

It is not but that we are sensible enough, that Rhyme bestows on *French Poetry* both proper and essential Graces, yet at the same time we are not insensible, that it brings with it inseparable Inconveniencies. Of these the most considerable is the feminine Rhyme, from the perpetual Uniformity of its Termination. There is nothing so fatiguing in a Poem as the Mute (*e*), which returns without end, and at the Close of every Period. In Verses set to Musick, this is still more disagreeable. The feminine Adjective, which ends in two or perhaps in three *e*'s, is, if I may so say it, doubly and trebly ridiculous. If these Terminations are absolutely so insupportable in Verse, must they not be also hateful in Prose?

Foreigners perceive this better than we who are accustomed to it. They cannot comprehend for what Reason we admit as necessary, Letters which we never pronounce, and which for that very reason become not only useless, but troublesome; this is one of the Whimfies with which they reproach us, amongst many others that are still more considerable. The masculine Rhyme, on the contrary, varies Sounds at Pleasure, and these are always round and full. It ought therefore to be made a Rule, that in Verses set to Musick, only these kind of Rhymes should be used; there requires nothing but Ears and a very little Taste to be convinced of this.

Might we not at this Rate furnish solid and sufficient Reasons for excluding all but masculine Verses? It is visible, that our Poetry would be the better for it; but let us also see how far it might be the worse. If we are not to perceive the Mute (*e*), it is absolutely useless, and the Verse becomes masculine: But if we are to perceive it, this brings great Difficulties both on the Speaker and Hearer. We must

however observe, that the retrenching superfluous and troublesome Letters in our Orthography, is a Thing absolutely impossible; for Habit hath render'd them natural to us and it is Foreigners only that suffer by them. Besides we cannot hope from the Complaisance either of the *Germans* or the *English*, that they will throw out their hissing or their guttural Letters, to render the Pronunciation of their Languages more easy to us; and therefore there is nothing of ill Manners in letting them continue to feel all the Difficulties of ours. And tho' it was true, that we should gain something by this, yet the Loss would certainly exceed that Gain; and therefore this Project, like many others, ought to be consider'd as only pleasing in Speculation.

How reasonable and useful soever new Laws may be, there is always a great deal of Danger in establishing them. How senseless soever some Customs are, yet it is not possible to destroy them without Risk. Whenever the contrary of this happens, it is either from a lucky Chance, or from a very rare and profound Wisdom, and between these it is not always easy to distinguish. The Bulk of Mankind govern themselves, generally speaking, not so much by Judgment or Reflection as by Habit; and the best Reason they can give for doing Things is, because they have been wont to do them. But amongst other Reasons that would attend the Reformation of our Orthography this would be one, and that no small one, viz. that it would produce the Ruin and total Extinction of the best Works that have been produced in *France* for one hundred and fifty Years, which in less than the Space of an Age would become absolutely unintelligible, except to such as made them their particular Study, and so become as much Strangers in their own as in any other Country, while a Groupe of Grammarians haughtily establish their own Reputations upon their Ruin. It is indeed certainly true, that sooner or later this will happen of Course, and as it were imperceptibly; but we ought to leave Nature to take her own Method in such Cases, and not to hasten her Operations.

Those little Alterations that are every Day making in our Orthography, Stile and Language, confirm what I have heretofore advanced, as to the Advantages that the *Greeks* and *Romans* will always have over us, even in our own Countries. After several thousand Years *Virgil* will be still understood; and yet in the Space of four Centuries, the Works



\* Works of *Corneille* will become unintelligible; at least, if before that Time our Tongue and our Orthography are not fixed; which is a Benefit rather to be wished for than expected. There are many who think that Rhime, at least, ought to give Place in Comedy, since it may be so well dispensed with, and allow Prose to come in its stead, or rather to resume the Place where it stood before. That Heroes, Kings, Ministers, and Grandees, should speak Verse in Tragedy, does not seem very unnecessary, the Majesty of their Characters, and the Dignity of the Subject, seeming equally to demand it. But what Necessity is there in Comedy that a Shopkeeper, a Peasant, a Footman, a Servant Maid, or a Mechanick, should scrupulously observe Measure and Rhime? At the very first Sight there is something in this most shockingly ridiculous.

\* The Verse itself too is so very useless, that we don't heed whether we discover it or not in the Pronunciation of the Actor, why not spare the Labour of making it to the Poet? The Player would then indeed learn his Part with more Difficulty; that is a Trifle. The Author would no longer fatigue himself in hunting of Rhime at the hazard of losing or spoiling his Thought, and that is a great deal. But *Plautus* and *Terence* have, nevertheless, wrote their Plays in Verse. True, but in what Verse? in one that differs from Prose in a certain kind of Measure, which does not strike us much, or, to say the Truth, which we can hardly perceive. It appears from hence, that they knew much better than we what really belongs to Comedy; and had no Notion of having it said of their Pieces that, though they wanted Intrigue, Business, Character, Sentiments, yet at least the Verification was admirable.

As this Essay, which is literally and exactly translated from the Original, answers the End of a Specimen of our Author's Writing, so it gives us at the same time a curious and concise Picture of the ancient and modern State of *French* Poetry; and affords us also some very just and useful Reflections upon the Difficulties that attend the correcting the common Orthography in any living Language. We may also observe that with a very few, and those too very trivial Alterations, this Discourse of our Author's might be made to suit the History and present State of our *English* Poetry, in which there has happened nearly the very same Revolutions. Anagrams, Acrosticks and Enigmas have had their Reign here as well as in *France*; the Burlesque Poetry, regular and irregular Stanzas, have been

in Fashion here as well as there, and are now out of Date. In one thing indeed we differ entirely from the *French*, for we never wrote Comedies in Verse; and the Tragedies we have of that Kind were in Imitation of theirs. The Mode was hastily taken up, but notwithstanding *Dryden*, *Lee*, and the famous Earl of *Orrery* endeavoured to recommend this foreign Dress, by appearing in it, yet it did not long prevail.

The other Essays of our Author are equally curious and entertaining; and some of them are particularly worth reading, especially the XXXIII. in which he enquires, whether the tender whining Romances are not as dangerous for young People to read, as Books of Obscenity. In the XLV. he examines, whether it is any Advantage for a Wit to be in good Circumstances, and whether the Success of his Writings ought to depend upon that of his Fortune: And in the LIII. he discusses this Question, Whether the Arts and Sciences ought to be interdicted to all Women; and why, generally speaking, most Women are rather contemned than esteemed, that turn their Thoughts towards them. Yet, after all, like our Tatlers and Spectators, these Essays are so much calculated for the Meridian under which they were written, that I very much doubt whether a Translation of the whole would be agreeable to the Generality of *English* Readers, though they cannot fail pleasing such as are able to peruse the Originals.

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## HISTORICAL MEMOIRS.

### *A succinct Account of the Swiss Cantons, their Allies and Subjects.*

THERE are very few Nations that are less, and yet hardly any deserves to be better known than the *Swiss*. They are placed in a Country which, though surrounded with Rocks and in a manner inaccessible, yet is very considerable and of great Consequence from its Situation, as will very fully appear from as succinct a Description of it as can be given.

Their Dominions are bounded on the North by part of *Alsace*, the *Black Forest*, and the Circle of *Suabia*; on the East by the Country of *Tyrol*; on the South by the Dutchies of *Savoy* and *Milan*, by the Territories of *Bergamo* and *Brescia*;

*Brescia*; and on the West by the *Franche Compté*, or, as it is commonly stiled, the County of *Burgundy*.

It appears from hence that they have for Neighbours the Subjects of the House of *Austria*, those of the Crown of *France*, the King of *Sardinia*, and the State of *Venice*. We need no other Account to give us very high Notions of the Force and Bravery of this Nation, than the bare Observation, that they have not only preserved their Freedom in spite of, but have been also always formidable to the most potent of their Neighbours: Yet their Country is very far from being large; in Length somewhat less than three hundred, and in Breadth very little more than a hundred Miles.

Before we proceed farther, it will be requisite to give some Account of the Distribution of these People. The Inhabitants of *Switzerland* then, may be divided into three Parts: First, the *Swiss* properly so called, or the thirteen Cantons; which stand in the following Order. 1. *Zurich*. 2. *Bern*. 3. *Lucern*, 4. *Wic*. 5. *Switz*. 6. *Underwald*. 7. *Zug*. 8. *Glaris*. 9. *Bazil* or *Basle*. 10. *Friburg*. 11. *Soluthurn*. 12. *Scaffhausen*; and 13. *Appenzel*. Of which the Protestant Cantons are, *Zurich*, *Bern*, *Bazil*, and *Scaffhausen*, with above two thirds of the Canton of *Glaris*, and more than half of *Appenzel*; the rest are all *Roman* Catholics.

Secondly, the Subjects of the *Switzers*, which are either such Towns and Bailliages as belong to them all, or to several in common, or that depend upon separate Cantons. Of the former they reckon nine; viz. the County of *Baden*, the *Free Villages*, the Counties of *Turgov*, *Sargantz*, and *Rhintal*, and the four *Italian* Bailliages of *Lugano*, *Locarno*, *Mendrisco*, and *Valmadia*; to which we must add the three Cities without Territory, viz. *Boemgarten*, *Mellingen*, and *Rapperswil*. The four Bailliages of *Lugano*, *Locarno*, *Mendrisco*, and *Valmodia*, were dismembered from the *Dutchy* of *Milan*, and belong to all the Cantons except *Appenzel*, which at that Time was not admitted into the Alliance. Three other Bailliages in *Italy*, viz. *Bellinzona*, *Valbrima*, and *Riviera*, were conquered by the Cantons of *Zurich*, *Switz*, and *Underwalde* from the *Dukes* of *Milan*. The little Territory of *Alfex*, and the County of *Werdenberg*, both seated on the *Rhine*, belong, the former to the Canton of *Zurich*, and the latter to that of *Glaris*. The Bailliage of *Gastren* belongs to the Cantons of *Switz* and *Glaris*; and the Cantons of *Bern* and *Friburg* possess the four Bailliages of *Morat*, *Gremton*, *Echelens*, and *Swartzenburg*, which they conquered from the *Dukes* of *Savoy*.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, The Allies of the *Switzers* are the *Grisons*, who are divided into three Leagues, that of the *Grisons*, of the House of God, and of the ten Jurisdications. They are partly Protestants and partly Papists, and have also a considerable conquered Country that belongs to them. The Town and County of *Neuchâtel*, of which we have shewn elsewhere the King of *Prussia* is Sovereign; the Abbot and City of *St. Gall* the little Republick of *Wallais*, which the Germans call *Wallis-Land*; the City and Republick of *Geneva*; the Town of *Bienne* or *Biel*, which is allied to the Canton of *Bern*; and the Town of *Mulhausen* not far from *Basel*, to which it is allied.

It is not to be expected that we should enter into a long Detail either Historical or Political, concerning these People, for that would require a considerable Volume, whereas what we have to say on them must be confined within a very narrow Compass. There is hardly one of the Cantons, States, or Cities beforementioned that agrees with the other in Point of Government; and indeed every kind of Government that ever was invented, is to be found amongst them; yet they are all maintained under their respective Forms, and in their respective Rights, from that common Love of Freedom and Justice, which prevails generally among the whole Nation.

The greatest part of their Country is the most rugged in its Appearance, and naturally the most barren in its Soil of any in *Europe*; and yet by Dint of Labour and Cultivation, they render it tolerably fruitful. All their Cities are well built, populous, and most of their Inhabitants live pretty much at their Ease, which is owing partly to their Industry, and partly to their Frugality. The Gentry of *Switzerland*, notwithstanding what is commonly reported of them, are, generally speaking, tolerably educated, and from their seeing foreign Countries generally well-bred. Their Traders have great Privileges, and some of them are in wealthy Circumstances; and as for their Peasants, they are very hardy and laborious. As their Women are justly reputed very honest as well as very good Housewives, so they are generally speaking very prolifick, and their Country being but narrow, this lays them under an absolute Necessity of sending out Numbers every Year to seek their Bread in foreign Countries.

As they are naturally of a Martial Disposition, and accustomed to Arms from their Youth, they usually seek some foreign Service or other; those of the Popish Cantons go  
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into the *French* and *Spanish* Pay; those of the Protestants, and not a few of the Popish likewise, into that of the *States General*; but wherever they are, they have the Honour to be accounted as good Troops as any in the World. After some Years Service more or less, according to their Contracts, the private Men return Home, though their Corps remain still in foreign Service, and are from Time to Time filled up with fresh Recruits. It is owing to these People that have served abroad both Officers and Soldiers, that the *Swiss* are never at a Loss for as large and well disciplin'd an Army as any Government in *Europe* can raise, which are at the same time the Guardians of their own Liberty, and the Protectors of their Neighbours Freedom. Neither is their Power grounded only on Opinion, for they have defended themselves at different Times against most of the great Powers in *Europe*, and though they have been sometimes outwitted, yet they were never beaten, or reduced to demand Peace by any Power whatever; so that they may be justly considered, taking in their Situation and their Militia, as the most unconquerable People in *Europe*.

It is very difficult, perhaps hardly possible, to make a just Computation of the Force of the *Swiss*. Some say, that the Canton of *Bern* alone can bring into the Field one hundred thousand Men; but at the same time it is said, that they could not maintain them for any Time. Things are much changed with this Nation from what they were formerly; for they have now several good Fortresses, though heretofore they had none. Many of the Gentry of *Switzerland* are very able Statesmen, as well as experienced Officers, and such in former Times were very scarce. Several of the Cantons now are very rich, and besides vast Sums that they have locked up at Home, have also great Wealth in foreign Banks, and particularly in our Funds. Every great City is well furnished with Artillery, and at *Bern* and *Zurich* they have Field and Battering Trains of Brass Cannon, than which there are few better in *Europe*. Yet with all this Force they are not in the least formidable to those that live near them, since they are without Doubt the very best Neighbours in the World; so void of Ambition, that they have no Idea of Conquest; such Lovers of Justice, that the very Report of Oppression will bring them to the Relief of the Distressed. By this Means the City of *Geneva* has been often, and will probably be always protected against two Powers, one the most enterprising, and the other the most ambitious in *Europe*.

Those who have treated of the Interest of the *Swiss*, seem to think that they may be some time or other in Danger from *France*; but of this there seems to be at present very little Appearance. For in the first Place it is not easy to conceive why the *French* should quarrel with them, since as themselves allow, and indeed all the World knows, the *Swiss* Troops in their Pay make the Flower of their Infantry. It is in the next Place very difficult to apprehend why the *Swiss* should quarrel with the *French*, from whom it is certain they receive considerable Advantages. It is true, that the *Swiss* are open on the Side of the *Franche Comte*; and it has been thought a great Oversight in this Nation to let the *French* become Masters of it; but in all Probability they depended upon their natural Strength; and within less than half a Century, when *France* talked very big, and threatened in relation to the Sovereignty of *Neuchatel* and *Valingen*, the *Swiss* were far so from showing any Concern about it, that they were ready to have taken up Arms, if *Lewis XIV.* had not immediately changed his Language.

As for the House of *Austria*, they will never attack or offend the *Swiss* for Fear of throwing them into the Arms of *France*, and there is no other Potentate in a Condition to disturb them. The only Point of their Interest which they seem not perfectly to understand, is the Power they have of protecting *Italy*; for if the Princes of this Country could be brought to enter into a Treaty of perpetual Neutrality, and could prevail upon the *Swiss* Cantons, in Consideration of an annual Subsidy, to join in it, and keep up a constant Body of Troops, to give Weight to that Neutrality, the Ballance there might be effectually settled; but private Interests, and the ambitious Views of small Princes as well as great, render this a Thing not so much to be hoped for as wished. With this Observation we shall conclude what we have to say of these People.

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The present State and Political Interests of the  
Republick of VENICE.

THE Glory of the *Venetian State* is at present indeed much inferior to what it was, when without Assistance she was a Match for the whole *Ottoman Power* by Land and Sea, and lost nothing of her Courage, and but very little of her Territories, by the famous League of *Cambray*, when rather out of Envy than from any better Cause, the greatest Powers in *Europe* were allied against her. But tho' it be true, that the Republick is not what she has been, that her Dominions are reduced within narrower Bounds, so that except what she possesses on the *Terra Firma of Italy*, in *Dalmatia*, and a few inconsiderable Islands, she has nothing left of those extensive Territories that contributed to enrich her Subjects by their Trade, and gave her so considerable a Rank amongst the Powers of *Europe*; yet she is still Mistress of enough, not only to deserve Notice, but also to be regarded as one of the most considerable Potentates in *Italy*.

It is highly to the Honour of this State that for upwards of twelve Centuries she has preserved her Freedom, and for a great Part of that Time has lived under the same Government, without suffering any of those dreadful Revolutions by which many of her powerful Neighbours have been involved in Blood and Confusion. This has justly given a high Reputation to the Wisdom of her Senators, who by their great Policy and wonderful Secrecy, have been able through so long a Track of Time, to guard with equal Diligence and Success, against foreign Confederacies and domestic Conspiracies, many of which they have defeated, when laid with the deepest Cunning, and supported with no inconsiderable Strength. Her very Losses are so far from reflecting Discredit on the Republick, that on the contrary, they do her the greatest Honour in the Sentiments of those who are capable of forming a right Judgment of History, and know how to distinguish properly on Causes and Events. The long War in Defence of *Candia* against the *Turks*, exhausted the Treasures, and weaken'd the Power of



this State to a Degree, that she has not been able to recover; but that War was continued for many Years against the whole Strength of the *Ottoman* Empire by Sea and Land, and was almost as fatal to the *Turks* as to her; for they too have been declining in Power and Reputation ever since: So that she might be truly stilled in that respect the Bulwark of *Europe*, to the Safety of which she contributed much more than she suffered by the Losses which by the Fortune of War sustained during that famous Contention.

The common Opinion that she continues still to decline, and that the very Being of the Republick is in Danger from a slow Consumption, has been perhaps taken up without due Attention, and for want of having just Notions of the wise and solid Maxims by which her Government is conducted. For tho' it be true, that she is in no Condition to maintain such a War as that of *Candia*, yet it is no less true, that as Things are now circumstanced, she has very little Reason to fear it. In the two last Wars with the *Turks* she sufficiently demonstrated that tho' her Forces were much weakened, she was far from having lost her former Spirit, or from wanting such a Power as was necessary for her Defence; and the noble Statue erected to the Honour of the late Field Marshal *Schulenberg* in the great Square of *Corsu*, which he so gloriously defended, will remain a perpetual Monument of the Bravery of her Troops, as well as of her Zeal and Gratitude to that intrepid Officer, which it may be hoped will not a little contribute to procure a Succession of Generals as worthy and as fortunate. Besides all this it ought to be remember'd, that she is now better secured against the *Turks* by her perpetual Alliance with the House of *Austria* than in former Times; and if at the same Time we reflect, that in Case she latter at any Time break with the *Turks*, in Virtue of that Alliance, they are sure of being supported by the *Russians*, it will be sufficiently evident, that the *Venetians* have much less to fear than they had in former Times. Since the Peace of *Passarowitz*, which was concluded on the 10th of *July* 1718, they have remained very quiet, and have very wisely avoided taking any Share in those Disputes that have perplexed *Europe*; but at the same Time have thought it proper to keep up a numerous Body of Forces, in order to render their Neutrality respected.

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That the Reader may perceive, that what we have advanced in relation to this Republick is founded in Truth, it may not be amiss to give a short Account of the Countries she possesses. In the first Place, the noble City of *Venice*, and the Islands about it, which are so populous, have so many Manufactures, and still carry on so great a Trade, more especially while the other Powers of *Italy* are at War, and the Subjects of the Republick enjoy the Benefit of her Neutrality, that the Revenue drawn from them by the State, amounts annually to three Millions of Ducats. On the *Terra Firma* or Continent of *Italy*, she possesses the *Trevisan*, the *Paduan*, the *Vicentin*, the *Veroneze*, the *Bregamase*, the Territory of *Brescia*, the City of *Crema* and its District, and the *Polesia*; they have also a great Part of *Friuli*, of *Istria*, of *Dalmatia* and *Albania*; and they still preserve the Islands of *Corsu*, *Zante*, *Cerigo*, *Finnes*, *Curzola* and *Cesalonja*: All these Countries are rich and fruitful, and the Inhabitants drive a very great Trade in the *Levant*, as well as in other Parts of *Europe*. The Revenue of the Republick is computed at about eight Millions of Ducats, and the annual Expence does not commonly exceed half that; so that in Time of Peace they are constantly laying up large Sums. Before the fatal War of *Candia*, they had in their Treasury fifteen Millions of Ducats in ready Money, exclusive of the famous Gold Chain, to which they annually added some Links, which forty Porters could hardly carry, and which on certain Festivals was extended cross the Square of *St. Mark*, for the Entertainment of the People. As they have now enjoyed Peace thirty Years, it may be presumed that their Coffers are again pretty full, so that upon any emergent Necessity, they would be able to make much greater Efforts than is commonly imagined.

As to the Government of *Venice*, it is so well known, that we need not describe it. We shall only observe, that it is a pure Aristocracy, and though the Duke has the Title of Prince, yet the Majesty of the Republick resides in the Senate. The great Maxim of this wise Body, is to manage the Government with the utmost Frugality, to encourage Trade as much as possible, and to preserve Peace as long as they are able. They have always a constant Eye upon the *Turks*, and have excellent Intelligence even in the *Seraglio* itself; so that they can hardly be surprized, and in Time of Peace they carry on a prodigious Commerce in all Parts of that Empire

Empire. They are jealous of the *Pope*, with whom they have many ancient Grounds of Dispute, which is the Reason that they exclude all Ecclesiasticks from their Counsels. They are obliged to live in great Friendship with the Emperor, tho' it is certain, that they are not at all desirous of seeing the Power of the House of *Austria*, extend itself in *Italy*. They were heretofore jealous of the Crown of *Spain* for the same Reason; and very probably this Spirit would revive, if *Don Philip* should gain any considerable Establishment in that Country, for the keeping even the Ballance of which they are as much or more concerned than any other Potentate, is the Business of their Statesmen.

In former Times the Republick was strongly inclined to favour *France*; the Embassador of this Crown received very high Honours at *Venice*, and, generally speaking, the *Venetian* Cardinals joined those of the *French* Faction in the Conclave; yet there is no Reason to presume, as some do from hence, that the Republick is governed by these Notions still; for the Circumstances of Things being changed, according to the settled Rules of their Policy, the Conduct of the Republick must change also; and the very same Principles that induced her to side with the *French* in the Conclave, will engage her now to act against her, and in Favour of the House of *Austria*, because the Family of *Bourbon* is become now too potent. It may indeed be surmised that this State, affecting Peace so much as she does, might be awed by the Power of *France*; but of this there is no sort of Appearance. For when *Lewis XIV.* about 1711, declared at *Rome*, Cardinal *Ottoboni*, a Subject of the Republick's, Protector of the Crown of *France*, and his Eminence had accepted that Dignity, contrary to the Maxims of the *Venetian* State, which never permits any that have been in their Service, to enter into that of other Princes; they proceeded without Delay and without Ceremony, to deprive him and all his Relations of the Privileges of Nobility, and to banish them their Dominions. We may therefore take it for granted, that the Grandeur of this House will be very far from being acceptable to the *Venetians*.

They have always maintained, and very probably will continue to maintain, a close Friendship and strict Alliance with the *Swiss*, there being a mutual Connection between their Interests; and each of them having frequent Occasions, from the Vicinity of their Territories, to ask and to receive Fa-

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vours of the other. They are likewise bound to live in good Intelligence with the Monarch of the *Two Sicilies*, and with the Grand Duke of *Tuscany*, on account of the Difficulties to which their Commerce would be unavoidably liable, in case of a Rupture, or even a Difference with either. There was heretofore a great Coolness between the Republick and the Dukes of *Savoy*, on Account that the latter used the Title of King of *Cyprus*; to which also the Doge of *Venice* pretends: And it is scarce to be conceived how much this slight Punctilio kept these two Powers at a Distance. But since the Duke of *Savoy* has become King of *Sardinia*, and the Situation of Things in *Italy* is so much changed, that the Ballance is almost constantly in his Hands, the *Venetians* have altered their Measures; and it is very certain, that, at present, there is a very good Correspondence between that Monarch and the Republick.

The long and warm Disputes that have happened heretofore between this Republick and that of *Genoa*, has occasioned such an Inveteracy as is scarce to be conceived; grounded also upon a Punctilio, the latter desiring to be regarded as an Equal, and the former treating her upon all Occasions as an Inferior. This Spleen was carried farther, during the fatal War with *Candia*, than one would have expected from the *Venetian* Prudence; for when the *Genoese* offered very considerable Assistance at a Time when *Venice* wanted it most, upon Condition that an Equality should subsist for the future, they rejected the Proposition with Disdain, and chose rather to run the Hazard of total Destruction, than to receive Assistance upon such Terms. Yet even this Quarrel seems now to be laid asleep, if not extinguished; for during the late Distress of the *Genoese*, it is very certain that the *Venetians* interposed not only with much Civility, but with great Earnestness at the Court of *Vienna*; and if we may depend upon the Reports that have been current in *Italy*, the *Genoese* have received pecuniary Supplies of a Nature that sufficiently declared the Depth of the Purse from whence they were drawn, though it was not held convenient to embark openly in her Quarrel.

Thus we have taken Pains to shew, that notwithstanding what has passed heretofore, the Republick of *Venice* is still in a Condition to support herself, and in no Danger either from the Power of her Enemies, or of her Neighbours; that if she loves Peace it is from wise and prudent Motives,  
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and not from Timidity; that as she forms no Pretensions upon her Neighbours, so she is inclined to live with them in the greatest Harmony imaginable; and in a Word that as she has no Views of Conquest for herself she is bound by Interest as well as led by Inclination to give all the Opposition possible to such as disturb the Peace of *Italy*.

**The END of NUMBER XXXVIII.**



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